

Featured Artifact: NBC Fireside Chat Microphone

Era 8: The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945)

<http://historyexplorer.americanhistory.si.edu/resource/?key=3620>



Look at the artifact presented to you. In a few sentences, respond to the following questions:

Describe: Objectively describe the artifact. What do you think it is made of? What does it look like? Does it look old or new? Is it intact, or is it damaged in some way?

Analyze: When, where or how do you think this item was used? What kind of person may have created or used this item? What significance do you think the object held, either for the creator or the user? Do you see words or images on the artifact that connect it to others (besides the creator and user)?

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Share your conclusions with a partner, then discuss the following:

Evaluate : Justify why you came to those conclusions about the artifact. What further questions do you have about the object? Of those questions, which could you solve by observing the object in person and which would you need to solve with research?

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Background Information

On March 12, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered the first of about thirty informal "Fireside Chat" addresses over the radio. His ability to communicate over this new medium directly and personally, addressing each listener as a respected friend, gave FDR a powerful tool to shape public opinion.

After reading and considering the background information, compose a response to the following:

Analyze: Address the following object-specific questions:

- Why did these Fireside Chats strongly influence FDR's ability to influence public perception? How might a modern listener respond to this medium?
- Why did the country need this type of guidance at this point in history?

Synthesize: What does this object tell us about the era in which it was created, or the American experience as a whole? How would you describe the social, economic, or political climate of America during this time? What connections can you make between this object and other things that you have seen, read, or experienced?

Analyze: Address the following era-specific questions:

- What were the causes and course of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and how did it reshape the United States' role in world affairs?